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OPEN LETTER

To All Friends And Supporters Of the SLP

Dear Friend and Supporter of the SLP:

Do you save your copy of *The People* every month? Some members and supporters of the Socialist Labor Party do. They refer to them to help themselves understand affairs of the day. They use them to fashion letters to the editors of their hometown newspapers, or to remind themselves of basic principles before discussing current events with their neighbors, coworkers, families and friends. Some collect the De Leon editorials featured in most issues, articles by other important socialist writers such as Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, or for the reprints that recall some important episode in the history of the working class and the class struggle. Some even order bound volumes at the end of every calendar year.

If you are among those who save at least a few issues of *The People* you may also be among those who are most concerned about its future and the future of the organization that publishes it, the SLP. If you are among them, or know someone who is, I want to ask you to do something.

I want you to take out as many as you have since last October and to look closely at a special feature printed in every issue without fail since then—at the “Funds” columns printed on page 6 or page 7 in each of them. There you will find listed the names of everyone who has responded to the appeals that have occupied this front page column since then. Chances are that your name is listed there too, once, twice, possibly several times—even if your name happens to be “anonymous.”

It's not only the names that I want you to look at. Most people who send donations to *The People* and the SLP couldn't care less if their names are printed. They simply want to help. They simply want *The People* to stay in print and the SLP to go on fighting. They don't want those of us who write, who edit, who proofread, who do the layout and make up, who process subscriptions and see to it that *The People* goes to press and into the mail every month to give up—especially not now.

The names are important for one special reason—there are many of them; not as many

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FBI's New Powers Further Subvert the Bill of Rights

Changes in FBI guidelines announced in May by Attorney General John Ashcroft will allow the CIA and the FBI to work together on domestic investigations. The changes make it much easier for the FBI to engage in counterintelligence programs of the sort that were supposedly circumscribed and brought under the “oversight” of Congress in the mid-1970s.

Any move to make repression easier should be opposed by all who favor protecting our rapidly diminishing civil liberties. Indeed, all who value the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights have no choice but to defend these freedoms. The question is how those who understand the need can fashion an effective defense. More, it is how to fashion an offense against repression so powerful that no similar assault on those freedoms and liberties can ever again be undertaken in this country.

The federal government, often in the name of democracy, and frequently with approving nods from Congress and the courts, has historically trampled upon basic civil rights and liberties in response to supposed threats to our liberties. The latest moves are justified as necessary to protect against a repetition of the crimes of Sept. 11. However, every Sunday school child knows that two wrongs don't make a right. One wrong cannot justify another, but one wrong may be useful to misrepresent the motives of those who would perpetrate a second wrong. Indeed, that has been done repeatedly over the

last 100 years with lingering and sometimes permanent effects on the very rights their restricted exercise are supposed to protect.

World War I brought with it the Sedition Act and the imprisonment of opponents of war for using “disloyal language.” The social atmosphere of World War II fostered the Smith Act, suppression of strikes, threats of labor conscription and the internment of Japanese-Americans. The Korean War and early Cold War climate contributed to the passage of the McCarran Act, which empowered the president to suspend the Bill of Rights and impose wholesale detentions of persons who “probably will” engage in espionage or sabotage.

The Vietnam War period saw massive government infiltration and disruption of antiwar, leftist and civil rights organizations, and violent suppression of protests and certain political groups.

In the mid-1980s, the mere possibility of a U.S. war in Central America prompted the Federal Emergency Management Agency to draft a contingency plan to impose martial law, suspend the Constitution, imprison Central American immigrants and conscript labor in the event of “widespread internal dissent or national opposition to a U.S. military invasion abroad.” FBI spying and disruption of antiwar groups was widespread even under congressional “oversight,” which ostensibly forbade it.

The attacks of Sept. 11 are being used to justify the new repressive measures implied by the reorganiza-



Shake/Daily Rag/LNS

tion of the FBI. A failure to stop these measures will certainly encourage those who would prefer to see the Bill of Rights reduced to mere window-dressing to keep chipping away until there are no more freedoms to lose or defend.

However important it is to resist repressive measures, the threat of repression will persist as long as capitalism exists. Capitalism, of course, bestows economic wealth and power on the capitalist class, and that economic wealth and power translates into control over the government. Whatever regard individual capitalists may have for their own personal freedoms, their overriding concern is that the capitalist class retains its power.

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How Not to Gauge Prosperity

By B.B.

A recent page one report in *The Dallas Morning News* (May 26) offered readers a morass of statistics taken from the Census of 2000. The purpose was to assure us that the decade of the 1990s was one of prosperous growth for North Texas accompanied by an increase in poverty, largely attributed to the influx of immigrants—mostly Hispanic. It leaves readers with the popular notion assiduously cultivated by the capitalist class that “the poor will always be with us”—and any how, they are not like the rest of us so they do not count.

Prosperity is implicitly defined by the median household income, which for Texas was \$39,927, representing a change of 13.3 percent in 10 years. For North Dallas cities, that median ranged down from \$200,001 to \$101,788 for the better off, and from \$13,333 down to \$4,500 for the poorest. All but one of those 25 communities has a Hispanic name. Besides, the article asserts, “Texans ended the decade better educated, living in larger, newer homes and owning more vehicles.”

The article goes on to extol the 1990s as a great era of prosperity and growth for Texas, particularly in such communities as Highland Park, Hebron and Westover Hills, which are places packed with capitalists, their managerial beneficiaries, lawyers and high-paid professionals.

“The percentage of families living in poverty increased during the decade in 39 [North Texas] area cities, including Dallas. And in 13 cities, more than one in 10 families had annual incomes below the poverty threshold of \$17,463 for a two-parent family of four.”

After a game of statistical “catch me if you can,” the report ends with a comment on poverty by Larry James, executive director of Central Dallas Ministries, who said: “You can count on it being underreported.”

The fact is that the accumulation of personal property such as clothes, automobiles, homes, TVs, VCRs, personal computers, etc., is not a gauge of anything for the vast majority of wage working residents of the state; nor are modest increases in annual incomes, which have historically and dramatically declined over the past

decades; nor is plundering farmland by the extension of housing and suburban growth an indication of prosperity—indeed, it is massive degeneration and waste.

What the report tells us is that the capitalist class made a killing during the 1990s, while the working class survived in various states of insecurity. Another source correctly pointed out that the difference between those in poverty and those in “affluence” is a week or two of unemployment for the former, perhaps a month or two for the latter, and for the really “affluent” maybe three to six months.

Regardless of how thin you slice it, however, for the vast majority a massive loss of jobs means legions of bill collectors coming to remove what little “affluence” they survive upon. It is no secret that the “prosperity” we supposedly have is buoyed by a massive bubble of working-class debt.

For the working class, which comprises the vast majority of Texas residents, true prosperity can only come with an end to their collective exploitation at the point of production by the capitalist class. It can only

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Daewoosa Fined, But Other Sweatshops Still Thrive

By B.G.

Ruthlessly exploited sweatshop labor exists not only in continental United States, supposedly "the land of the free," but also in far-off American Samoa and Saipan in the Pacific. The minimum wage in the American territory of Samoa is \$2.60 an hour; about half what it is on the mainland. Time-and-a-half pay is also required for overtime work. Samoan garment factory owners, however, have often found ways of avoiding even these puny payments to workers and have exploited them shamefully. Sometimes they illegally pay only \$2.25 an hour.

One horror story in Samoa concerns the brutal working conditions at the Daewoosa company's factory, a firm that made sportswear for retailers in the United States and other countries. The main owner of the factory was a South Korean citizen, Kil-Soo Lee.

American Samoa, in a desire to expand its economy, had encouraged the establishment of garment factories and the immigration of workers from Asia. Daewoosa and several immigrant-recruiting companies, in violation of law, had charged the mostly Vietnamese and Chinese immigrants from \$3,000 to \$7,000 to obtain jobs at the factory.

The workers had been enticed to Samoa and the factory by offers of free room and board. This often meant that two workers were assigned to sleep together in a single bed at the factory's dormitory. Sometimes workers were punished by denial of food. Sometimes also the company guards beat them for minor infractions of company-imposed regulations.

Daewoosa got around the law for time-and-a-half pay for overtime by placing special charges on room and board to recoup the extra wages.

Also, the company often refused to pay the workers their week's wages and then punished those who went to court for relief by firing them and deporting them. During one strike when workers demanded their pay before they would continue to work, the company refused the workers food for two days.

When one dispute resulted in the Department of Labor forcing Daewoosa



Ball...

...and chain

to pay the workers back wages, the company merely paid the withheld wages and then demanded the money back again under threat of deportation.

On April 16 of this year, a court in American Samoa finally cracked down on Kil-Soo Lee and his Daewoosa company, ordering them to pay \$3.5 million to the 270 workers in the factory. This amounts to an average of \$13,000 per worker.

Also, a federal indictment charged owner Lee with keeping workers in involuntary servitude by threatening them and by confiscating their passports and their plane tickets home.

Has justice finally triumphed? Don't count on it. Mr. Lee has not gone to trial yet and he is contemplating an appeal. The Daewoosa factory closed 18 months ago, declared bankruptcy, and there is a possibility it might not have sufficient funds to pay the judgment. The lawyer for the immigrant workers, in that event, is contemplating prosecuting the two Vietnamese recruiting companies that were also found guilty and liable by the court.

On May 10, *The New York Times* carried an editorial, "Sweatshops Under the American Flag," pointing out that not only were conditions in the Samoan factory "egregious," but that similar conditions exist on "Saipan, the largest island of the American Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas."

For Saipan, the minimum wage is

\$3.05 an hour. Wage cheating on overtime is common. There are 30 factories in Saipan, turning out "Made in America" clothing for numerous well-recognized American brands such as Gap, Dayton Hudson and The Limited, as *The Times* notes.

About 15,000 workers are currently in Saipan's garment industry. Most are women from China and, similar to Samoa's exploitative practices, they must pay recruiters or factories to secure jobs. Some pay as much as \$8,000 for the privilege of working in these slave conditions, which helps to keep them in nearly life-long debt.

The Saipan government has repeatedly opposed legislation to ameliorate this brutal system for workers. Those in the seats of power thus obviously are acting as the protectors of Saipan's exploiters.

Members of the U.S. Congress are well aware of the deplorable working conditions in Saipan, and concerned members of that body have attempted for years to equalize the Northern Marina's minimum wage laws with that of the United States, which is only a trifling \$5.15 an hour.

These attempts have been continually blocked by U.S. House of Representatives Republican whip Tom DeLay. DeLay's romance with Saipan's ruthless capitalists was discussed in *The People's* March 1998 article on Saipan's labor

bonated water and whatever other ingredients go to make up the Coca-Cola Co.'s signature product. The cost of the labor involved in retrieving, repackaging and redistributing a commodity made from cheap and plentiful raw materials hardly seems economical.

However, persistent losses at the local level brought on by overproduction un-

(Continued on page 7)

exploitation:

"The most prominent Republican tourist to Saipan has been Rep. Tom DeLay of Texas, majority whip in the House of Representatives, who, along with his wife, daughter and three aides, was given the royal treatment over the New Year's holiday. He met with leading politicians of the commonwealth, was wined and dined every evening, twice tried out the finest golf course on Saipan, and with his family visited other delightful points of interest between his consultations with the local politicians and leading capitalists.

"Upon his return to Washington in January, DeLay was all agog about the grand economic policies of the commonwealth and promised to upend any Democratic moves to touch the present wage and immigration situation in the Northern Marianas."

The New York Times is obviously shocked, just shocked that such brutality exists under the American flag. Its very knowledgeable and well-educated editorial writers should by now be aware of the criminality of the capitalistic system. Certainly the paper has reported enough examples of it over the years. Is the *Times* aware that in New York City alone, where the paper is published, the Department of Labor estimates that 4,500 of the city's 7,000 garment factories are sweatshops?

For *The People*, the exploitative nature of capitalism is no mystery. Capitalism is based upon inequality and upon squeezing the most out of the workers. In such a system, greed is good and humane treatment of workers is often an inconvenience if it interferes with profits. True democracy and decency do not and cannot exist under capitalism.

Do You Belong?

Do you know what the SLP stands for? Do you understand the class struggle and why the SLP calls for an end of capitalism and of its system of wage labor? Do you understand why the SLP does not advocate reforms of capitalism, and why it calls upon workers to organize Socialist Industrial Unions?

If you have been reading *The People* steadily for a year or more, if you have read the literature recommended for beginning Socialists, and if you agree with the SLP's call for the political and economic unity of the working class, you may qualify for membership in the SLP. And if you qualify to be a member you probably should be a member.

For information on what membership entails, and how to apply for it, write to: SLP, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Ask for the SLP Membership Packet.

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Stale Coke Sold To Dallas Poor

By John-Paul Catusco

Workers at a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Dallas recently exposed a long-standing policy of redistributing expired soda to stores in poor and largely African-American neighborhoods.

Apparently stale Coke that sat unsold on store shelves past its expiration date was routinely taken back to the bottling plant, removed from its old cardboard packing and placed in new boxes. The repackaged and relabeled goods were then shipped off to poorer neighborhoods for sale at discount prices.

"I knew what we were doing was not right," said William Wright, a Coke delivery man for the past 14 years. "But every time I brought it up, I'd hear: 'I'm the boss. You do what I say.'"

Store managers in minority neighborhoods reported that the bottler responded to complaints by sending workers equipped with new packaging and window cleaner to erase the old expiration dates from bottle labels out of sight in the stock rooms of the complaining stores.

A spokesman for the Coca-Cola Bottling

Co. of North Texas denied the charges made by distribution workers and store owners, according to a report printed on May 19 by *The New York Times*.

The newspaper obligingly added that none of the workers who finally balked at what their bosses had them doing for years claimed that the expired soda posed a significant health risk. "Soda can be old enough to grow mold without causing acute illness," it ventured to add. "But soda past its expiration date goes flat and loses some of its taste."

Delivery drivers and warehouse workers are not experts on health risks, of course, and were motivated solely by feelings of conscience that the practice was unfair, and the *Times* studiously avoided making any risky claims of its own.

Unless it can be shown that Coca-Cola follows similar practices in other cities it seems likely that the redistribution policy followed in Dallas was a purely local or regional affair. It is hard to imagine that any significant losses would be felt at the corporate level by disposing of a few thousand bottles of corn sugar, car-

San Francisco Mayor Would Soak Laundry Workers

By Carl C. Miller Jr.

Capitalism's economic downturns wreak havoc on the working class. In these days of the anything-goes free market, however, even once "secure" government jobs are on the chopping block, particularly at the local level. As capitalists big and small shrivel up or turn their bellies to the sky, tax bases start to shrink. Consequently, many city governments are cutting jobs and "outsourcing" work to struggling private firms, with no concern for the human costs involved.

The cutbacks do not affect many bureaucrats near or at the top of the bureaucratic pile, and heaven forbid that "law and order" should ever be put at risk. No, as the lower levels of the capitalist state tighten their belts and retreat back from their sideline business of providing services toward their main occupation of maintaining order, many of the jobs that go are those that are socially useful and productive.

On June 6, for example, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that laundry workers at Laguna Honda Hospital, a long-term public care facility serving the city and county of San Francisco, may soon be victimized by cost-cutting measures.

The laundry jobs are some of the lowest paid civil service jobs in San Francisco, with workers—many with families to support—drawing about \$35,000 a year.

The work done at the laundry is often tedious and dangerous in more ways than one. About 10 million tons of laundry go through the facility in a day, much of it soaked in urine and blood or caked with feces.

Workers wear protective clothing from head to toe, leaving only their eyes and necks exposed. They rotate assignments to keep down boredom and decrease the risk of repetitive stress injuries.

Lolida Washington, a 57-year-old widowed mother of two teenagers, holds one of these dirty, low-pay jobs. She has worked at the laundry for 15 years, and worries how she would make it without her job. "This is the only work we have, if we don't have this," she wanted to know, "what do we have? How do we take care of our families?"

Mayor Willy Brown says he has no choice. He has to meet a legal mandate for a "balanced budget," and outsourcing laundry work to a private firm would save the city about \$1 million.



"Look... why don't we just quit this silly chase and go raid the employee pension fund." Carol *Simpson

Brown, a consummate politician if there ever was one, can always be counted on for a few consoling words while wielding the governmental ax, and he was careful to shed a few conspicuously public crocodile tears over the situation. "To have to lay them off is like laying off my mother," he said. "It's painful."

The mayor's "pain" oozed like jelly from a doughnut, but he has no genuine consolation for the laundry workers. They face real pain, the pain of being without even their indecently low incomes to support themselves and their families.

There has been some behind-the-scenes politicking between Brown and unions representing more than 27,000 city workers, according to the *Chronicle*. Apparently his honor, the mayor, wants the laundry workers to take from their wages to pay into their pension fund to make up for some of the lost capitalist and other property taxes the city used to cover the cost. If they do there will be no layoffs, or so says Willy Brown. As incentive, the *Chronicle* noted, "the city would kick in a small raise at the end of the year."

Why would the mayor offer "a small raise" while threatening to eliminate jobs and the totality of wages that go with them? From where will the funds come for the "small raise" if the city is so

strapped for funds since the dot-com debacle that the mayor felt compelled to make his threat against these worst paid and least able to resist of all city workers?

Most likely the "small raise" would come from the interest or profits the city might get from sinking the workers' contributions into some speculative capitalist scheme or other. By pooling the tiny contributions individual workers would make to the so-called pension fund, the city would scrape together a tidy sum to invest in capitalist ventures in hopes of gaining a profit from the exploitation of other workers. The city would then get its dividends, from which it would drop a few pennies back into the pension fund and into the laundry workers' pockets.

Some unions have agreed to this, but others have not, among them the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) that represents the threatened Laguna Honda laundry workers. Publicly, the dissenting unions and the mayor are both saying their positions are firm, according to the report, but privately they are still negotiating.

In true-to-form trade union fashion, the SEIU failed to inform the rank and file about the mayor's scheme. Many workers learned of it from a reporter.

Lolida Washington and her coworkers reportedly said they would be willing to

pay into their pension plans if it would save their jobs, though that would lower their wages, make life even more difficult and lower their chances of deriving any benefit from a pension. Nonetheless, the SEIU remains adamant, probably on the theory that it is better to lose some dues now than to give wily Willy what he wants, thereby encouraging him to try it again on a wider scale.

Bryan Uyeno, an 11-year employee at Laguna Honda and shop steward for SEIU Local 250, which represents the laundry workers, also is adamant about his support for the union's position. "We shouldn't have to give back anything we already have," he said. "The people before me fought hard to get this for us, and I'm not going to say it's all right to give it up. That wouldn't be right."

What Uyeno doesn't understand is that those who went before him fought hard for the wrong thing. Had they fought for wages large enough to provide themselves with a decent living and to set aside for their retirement those in the here and now wouldn't be in the predicament they are in.

The Laguna Honda workers are worried about their jobs. Washington said, "Right now I just have to wait to find out what's happening. I thought I had a secure job, but now I don't know." Washington's coworker, 62-year-old Melba Davis, is in the same predicament, "This job is real important to me. I want to retire soon and I want to pay off my bills before I do that." At her age the prospects of finding another job are slim. She said that if she loses her job, "I don't think I would even bother looking."

Under the present capitalist order, workers are just pawns, bullied about by both their bosses and their so-called unions and manipulated for everyone's advantage but their own.

It's time for the workers to organize themselves into unions that will get their authority from the rank and file alone and represent the true interests of the working class. The only organization that can meet those requirements is a Socialist Industrial Union, in which workers will have the power to fight against the encroachments of capital more effectively, but also to change the world.

Study the Socialist Industrial Union program of the SLP and learn what a real union is all about.

Poultry Workers Win Compensation Suit

By B.G.

Men and women working in the poultry industry are among the lowest paid of American workers. Their work is exacting and repetitive. The various tasks include killing, plucking, cleaning and gutting the birds. A certain portion of this lot is then left whole for roasters. Other carcasses are cut into various parts and some of the parts skinned, all to satisfy the preferences of the consumers.

Because they work with food products, poultry workers are required to wear protective gear and clothing, including hair nets—not only to protect themselves but to protect the food from contamination from human blood, hair and bacteria, and to protect their employers from consumer lawsuits.

For years, poultry industry capitalists have refused to pay their workers for the time it took to put on and remove this protective clothing and gear. The poultry companies had insisted that this activity was just part of their employees' personal time.

On May 9, a lawsuit on behalf of the workers begun under the Clinton administration by the U.S. Department

of Labor's Wage and Hour Administration was finally won against Perdue Farms. The decision affirmed the Labor Department's contention that the "dressing and doffing" procedure was related to work safety.

The settlement was for \$10 million, one of the largest reached by the department. Perdue also agreed to pay their employees in the future for this procedure. It was estimated that workers spend eight minutes a day putting on and taking off the required clothing and gear. This would mean an extra \$500 a year for each worker's unpaid work. The decision covers a period of two past years.

The \$10 million is to be distributed to 25,000 former and current Perdue workers, including the undocumented immigrants who worked for the company.

On May 9 also, the Labor Department filed a similar lawsuit against Tyson Foods in Federal District Court in Birmingham, Ala., on behalf of the workers in its plant in Blountsville, Ala.

Tyson, one of the largest poultry producers, has 65,000 poultry-processing workers.

Predictably, Tyson is promising a vig-

orous legal defense. It claims that it is fully abiding by the wage and hours laws and that other judicial decisions have found that putting on and taking off this safety equipment was personal time, not work time. Tyson agrees; and why would it not agree? After all, what are capitalist "labor laws" if not laws of, by and for the capitalist class?

The lawsuit against Tyson is ongoing. No capitalist enterprise ever surrenders gracefully when profits are at stake. Without its workers, who produce its wealth, the company would not prosper. It is an axiom of capitalism, however, that the greatest part of that wealth should remain at the top and as little as possible should trickle down to the working class.

the People
Founded April 5, 1891

The People (ISSN-0199-350X), continuing the *Weekly People*, is published monthly by the Socialist Labor Party of America, 661 Kings Row, San Jose, CA 95112-2724.

Periodicals postage paid at San Jose, CA 95101-7024. Postmaster: Send all address changes to *The People*, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Communications: Business and editorial matters should be addressed to *The People*, P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042-0218. Phone: (408) 280-7266. Fax: (408) 280-6964.

Production Staff: Donna Bills, Ken Boettcher, Robert Bills, acting editor.

Access *The People* online at <http://www.slp.org>. Send e-mail to: thepeople@igc.org.

Rates: (domestic and foreign): Single copy, 50 cents. Subscriptions: \$5 for one year; \$8 for two years; \$10 for three years. By first-class mail, add \$6 per year. Bundle orders: 5-100 copies, \$8 per 100; 101-500 copies, \$7 per 100; 501-1,000 copies, \$6 per 100; 1,001 or more copies, \$5 per 100. Foreign subscriptions: Payment by international money order in U.S. dollars.

Abolition of Poverty

By Daniel De Leon

An examination of capitalism and its philosophical "justifications" as presented by a Jesuit priest. Contrasts socialism's materialist conception of history with class society's "idealism."

72 pp.—\$1.25 postpaid

NEW YORK LABOR NEWS
P.O. Box 218
Mtn. View, CA 94042-0218

the People

Published by the Socialist Labor Party Established in 1891

National Secretary: Robert Bills

VOL. 112 NO. 4

JULY 2002

Capitalism Is Obscene

Little so blatantly demonstrates the continued absurdity of the division of the world's population into ruling and ruled classes—and accordingly the imperative need to build a world *without* classes if abundance, peace and the pursuit of happiness are to be had by all—than the yearly figures on the number of billionaires released by that unapologetic defender of capitalist-class rule, *Forbes* magazine.

What? *Forbes* demonstrating the obscenity of class rule in today's world? Well, not by itself. It is in juxtaposition with other figures that the 16-year-old *Forbes'* list of billionaires takes on its real significance. This spring that service was provided by the Institute for Policy Studies. IPS, in its own words, says that each year it "studies the list of the world's billionaires and tries to put their wealth in perspective by comparing it to other things that are big and important in the world."

Among the comparisons IPS drew from *Forbes'* list for 2001, which reported a total of 497 billionaires worldwide, was this astounding fact: the "collective wealth of the 497 is...greater than the combined incomes of the poorest half of humanity."

Pause for just a moment here and let that comparison sink in. The wealth of the world's 497 richest people is now greater than the *combined* incomes of the poorest half of the *planet*.

On the very face of it one would think this obscene reality would spur millions to action across the face of the planet to change the way humanity worldwide organizes, produces and distributes goods and services—the economic wealth produced *collectively* by great masses of workers and peasants, in great industries built by workers where thousands come together to produce the world's wealth.

Why is it that today the world still accepts such an absurdity when it seems so apparent that a tiny minority is *privately* appropriating the vast majority of humanity's collectively produced wealth, and that the majority is therefore virtually enslaved to this tiny class of owners?

It is so for the very same reason that such a tiny minority at the very top of the capitalist heap—and an only marginally larger minority that owns and controls the vast majority of wealth produced by *all* the world's working classes—is able to appropriate this wealth. By virtue of its ownership and control of the means of life, this tiny minority controls far more than the economic sphere of human life.

As Karl Marx put it in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life."

Virtually every source of mass information, especially of mass-distributed print and broadcast news and information—but also including films, the pulpit and the educational system—provides a conduit for promoting continued capitalist-class rule. Privately owned by and

operated in the profit interests of capitalists, and supported primarily by the paid advertising of other capitalists, the major media have a material interest in propagandizing workers to accept capitalism and to ignore their own distinct interests as members of the working class. Likewise dependent upon the economic resources of the capitalist class are the educational system and organized religion.

Even the reform-minded among these elements do workers a disservice. Today's growing social, economic and environmental crises cry out for a *fundamental* transformation of society, while reformers seek to prune the most ugly fruit of a system whose whole trunk has long since gone to rot.

So-called "organized labor" also cannot be trusted to counter this influence. Based on the false principle that the interests of the capitalist class and the working class can be reconciled, these unions and their papers are the voices of the labor *faker*. They speak for the interests of those who *pose* as representatives of labor but have a material stake in the business of packaging groups of workers and selling them out, in the process of selling "labor peace" to their exploiters.

These facts do not mean that there is no hope for the world to change. As Marx continued in the preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*, "At a certain stage of development, the material forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or—this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms—with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure."

In the end, historic forces, including capitalism's cyclical and ever worsening economic crises and continually intensified class antagonisms, will arouse today's ruled classes to a consciousness of the evil of class rule and private ownership of the means of life, and they will resist and overcome capitalist rule. In the end, workers will become aware that capitalism long ago outlived its usefulness in the historic development of the world's productive forces, and that today it merely acts as a fetter upon the further development of human society. Meanwhile, all Socialists must denounce the wage system, under which the mass of useful producers are virtually the slaves of the tiny minority who perform no socially useful labor whatever, but merely own.

All forward-thinking people must openly take the side of the working class in this struggle. Starting from the proposition that labor alone is the source of all social wealth, they must follow where fact and social science lead, to the only logical resolution of the class struggle: the abolition of capitalism and the creation of a socialist society, owned and controlled by the producers themselves.

Only under such a truly democratic, socialist system will the vast means of social wealth production in existence today—but which today is controlled by so incredibly few—become available to alleviate and eventually end the massive problems of hunger, poverty, war, racism and environmental crises that face humanity today. Join the fight! Join the SLP today!

—K.B.

A De Leon Editorial

Five Tenets Of Organization



The following article was written by Daniel De Leon for the 1906 May Day issue of the *Cleveland Volksfreund*, a German-language paper. It was reprinted in the *Daily People*, May 1, 1906. In it De Leon tells in clear and incisive language how the Socialist Labor Party rerouted its original course, which aimed exclusively for political power. The five tenets of socialist organization De Leon laid down are as valid today as they were when this was written.

De Leon refers to certain compromises that were forced on the German Social Democratic Party by the circumstance that Germany was not then a democratic country. Those compromises eventually overwhelmed the SPD and reduced it to a party of reform. Today it is one of the major parties of German capitalism.

The "Industrial Workers of the World" De Leon refers to was the original IWW, which was based on the socialist principle that emancipation must be won through political as well as industrial action. In 1908 the IWW was captured by the anarcho-syndicalist element, which promptly struck the political clause from the Preamble of its Constitution.

The Socialist Labor Party

By Daniel De Leon

A sketch of the Socialist Labor Party is a difficult thing to make. The events of today cannot be understood but by the light of the events of yesterday; nor can the events of yesterday be appreciated in their full value except by the light of the events of today—that is, the ripened events of yesterday.

Historians have this whole sequel before them. They are not truly historians, nor is what they write history, except the subject has been rounded up and is complete.

The SLP is not a thing of the past. Its work is not yet rounded up and complete. We may have a better comprehension of its acts of yesterday by its acts of today; but seeing that its acts of today will require the acts of tomorrow in order to be themselves well understood, it is obvious that a sketch of the party from the present historic elevation can be only cursory.

German SPD Experience

The SLP went, in a way, through the experience of the Social Democracy in Germany, that is to say, the prow of its ship is not today directed to the same point, exclusively, as at the start. Its "sea letters" have remained the same; its goal has not been altered; but the winds and

the currents it has had to beat against, and the unveiling of the opposite shore, as the ship drew nearer, have all contributed to compel it to tack.

This experience is one made by all revolutionary parties of the present and of past years, in all countries. I have singled out the German Social Democracy as a parallel to our SLP merely on account of the contrast that the very parallel establishes between the two.

Started as an unqualifiedly socialist revolutionary party, consequently anti-parliamentarian, as Liebknecht's great dictum, "*Parliamentiren ist paktiren*" [to parliamentarize is to compromise], indicates, the German Social Democracy was compelled by the exigencies of the navigation of the politico-social waters of Germany to attend to immediate needs. As excellently put by the Berlin Social Democratic paper, *Die Neue Gesellschaft*, of last March 21: "*Wir in Deutschland haben nicht nur für den Sozialismus, sondern VORERST AUCH NOCH FÜR DIE DEMOKRATIE ZU KAMPFEN.*" [We in Germany must fight, not for socialism only, but first of all for a democracy.]

SLP Rerouted Its Course

Contrariwise, and similarly, the SLP,
(Continued on page 6)

what is socialism?

Socialism is the collective ownership by all the people of the factories, mills, mines, railroads, land and all other instruments of production. Socialism means production to satisfy human needs, not, as under capitalism, for sale and profit. Socialism means direct control and management of the industries and social services by the workers through a democratic government based on their nationwide economic organization.

Under socialism, all authority will originate from the workers, integrally united in Socialist Industrial Unions. In each workplace, the rank and file will elect whatever committees or representatives are needed to facilitate production. Within each shop or office division of a plant, the rank and file will participate directly in formulating and implementing all plans necessary for efficient operations.

Besides electing all necessary shop officers, the workers will also elect representatives to a local and national council of their industry or service—and to a central congress representing all the industries and services. This all-industrial congress will plan and coordinate production in all areas of the economy. All persons elected to any post in the socialist government, from the lowest to the highest level, will be directly accountable to the rank and file. They will be subject to removal at any time that a majority of those who elected them decide it is necessary.

Such a system would make possible the fullest democracy and freedom. It would be a society based on the most primary freedom—economic freedom.

For individuals, socialism means an end to economic insecurity and exploitation. It means workers cease to be commodities bought and sold on the labor market and forced to work as appendages to tools owned by someone else. It means a chance to develop all individual capacities and potentials within a free community of free individuals.

Socialism does not mean government or state ownership. It does not mean a state bureaucracy as in the former Soviet Union or China, with the working class oppressed by a new bureaucratic class. It does not mean a closed party-run system without democratic rights. It does not mean "nationalization," or "labor-management boards," or state capitalism of any kind. It means a complete end to all capitalist social relations.

To win the struggle for socialist freedom requires enormous efforts of organizational and educational work. It requires building a political party of socialism to contest the power of the capitalist class on the political field and to educate the majority of workers about the need for socialism. It requires building Socialist Industrial Union organizations to unite all workers in a classconscious industrial force and to prepare them to take, hold and operate the tools of production.

You are needed in the ranks of Socialists fighting for a better world. Find out more about the program and work of the Socialist Labor Party and join us to help make the promise of socialism a reality.

A PAGE FROM WORKING-CLASS HISTORY

The Paterson Silk Workers' Strikes of 1911–1912

The following article from the Daily People of June 28, 1912 is the sixth in a series of reports on the Paterson silk workers' strikes of 1911–1912. The Daily People of New York City was the official daily newspaper of the Socialist Labor Party. The Paterson silk strikes were conducted by the Industrial Workers of the World, with headquarters at Detroit, Mich. This report was published following the arrest of Detroit IWW organizer and strike leader Rudolph Katz in May 1906 while on picket duty in Paterson during the second wave of strikes. (See June issue.) The series will conclude with an epilogue on the significance of the strikes and the organization that conducted them.

—Editor

TRUCE DECLARED IN PATERSON

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF LOCAL 25, IWW, TAKES ACTION.

Strike of Silk Workers Declared Off Until Such Time As Toilers Will Have Gathered Strength for Another Battle—Action Must Yet Be Ratified—Attention Will Be Given to Building Up Union.

Paterson, N.J., June 27.—The Executive Board of Local 25, IWW, at a meeting which lasted until late last night, passed a motion to declare the present strike of silk workers ended. Before a vote was taken the situation in the silk industry in general, and in this city in particular, was carefully gone over and the conclusion was reached that as the slack season is now in "full blast" it serves no practical purpose to continue the strike. The opinion was that it is better to call a truce and thus gain time in which to draw the ranks together and strengthen them for another battle against the sneaking, dishonorable silk manufacturers when a good opportunity presents itself.

At a meeting called by Local 25 and held in Turn Hall last Monday night the general feeling was that the strike should be called off so that the union could gather strength for a future fight. Another mass meeting will be held in the same hall tomorrow night (Friday)

for the purpose of ratifying the action taken by the Executive Board.

The strike which will thus be ended has affected between 20 and 30 shops, operating from 10 to 200 looms each and employing altogether about 1,200 weavers. It was the second strike conducted by the IWW against those shops and followed close upon the heels of a first strike which was won. The manufacturers who had settled, it will be remembered by readers of *The People*, went back on their words and reduced the wages below what they had promised to pay. This necessitated a second strike on the part of the weavers if they did not desire to see the concessions they had gained snatched from them again. Except for the unscrupulous and dishonorable tactics of the employers no second strike would have been called.

Had not the slack season set in at that time the strike would have been won anyway, but as events occurred the bosses found no great hardship in keep-

ing the majority of their looms idle.

The union will bend all its efforts now toward organizing the working class of the city so that a more solid front can be presented to the capitalists next time a fight is necessary. The defeat is in some measure charged up to the fact that the organization was built up under fire, i.e., while the big general strike was on. This was a weakness which under other circumstances would undoubtedly have been overcome. Circumstances, however, did not favor the second strike and so the truce has been called to enable the organization to regain its strength.

The strikers have been commended on all sides for the splendid fight which they have put up.

Many shops in the city at which no second strike occurred are still enjoying the advantages gained by the first strike.

There is one shop, Wadsworth's on Beech Street, where the day workers are enjoying an increase of 50 cents a day and piece workers have also gained something due to the strike which occurred there through the efforts of IWW members who worked in the shop. The majority of the workers there, however, were strike breakers in a strike of 18 months or more ago, and they would not join the IWW although being perfectly willing to take benefits accruing from the IWW agitation and strike movement.

This is only one instance which goes to show that although the strikers are apparently defeated in a few of the smaller shops, still the gains made for the city's silk workers are tremendous and the credit is due to the fighting spirit of the workers and the IWW organization.

The strikers are far from feeling defeated or discouraged. They know

that they have no reason to be disheartened. At the worst they return to work on the terms existing before the general strike but with the knowledge that the bosses will hesitate to inflict any new indignities upon them. And what is most important, they have the satisfaction of knowing that they have forestalled the three and four loom system by their heroic battle.

It is expected that the meeting tomorrow night will be well attended.

255075100
years ago

Racist—Restrictionist— Reactionary

(Weekly People, July 5, 1952)

Sen. Patrick A. McCarran's reaction to the president's June 25 veto of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Bill was the charge that the veto was "one of the most un-American acts I have witnessed in my public career." Mr. Truman, he said, "has adopted the doctrine that is promulgated by the *Daily Worker*."

As it happens, the McCarran bill was opposed by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the National Council of Catholic Charities and other Roman Catholic institutions and organs, including the Jesuit magazine *America*. The day before the veto Msgr. John O'Grady, general secretary of Catholic Charities, expressed the "fervent hope" that the bill "would not become law."

Sen. McCarran is a Catholic who follows the Vatican line on most issues, but he is also a politician who (apart from his violent prejudices and his alliances with chauvinist organizations) has learned the value of damning his opponents with the "communist" label. His denunciation of the president inadvertently pinned the "communist" label on the Catholic organizations that agree with the president.

The president's veto was, in part at least, a campaign document. It was quite consistent with Mr. Truman's recent political moves to take votes from Eisenhower or Taft, as the Republican candidate for president, by forcing the Democratic Party to seize the civil liberties issue. Nevertheless, the president's message did present many of the social issues involved in the McCarran bill.

The bill's provisions of arbitrary power for the deportation of immigrants, said the president, "are worse than the infamous Alien Act of 1798." The bill subjects children of immigrants to the risk of loss of citizenship. Its punishment of undefined "derelictions" imposes thought control on immigrants. Etc. In short, as *The New York Times* stated in its editorial hailing the veto, the bill is "racist, restrictionist and reactionary."

The veto message also took into account the bill's effect on "the growing needs of our nation [read "capitalism"] for manpower to maintain the strength and vigor of our economy."

'Cheap Labor' Not All It's Cracked Up to Be

By B.B.

The *Dallas Morning News* recently dealt a blow to the widely promoted theory that American workers lose jobs to lower paid workers abroad in a report that announced, "Mexico losing its manufacturing edge." (May 12)

The article enters into a lengthy discussion of how various capitalists are wrapping up their operations in Mexico and seeking more congenial profit venues. Most of those fleeing are high-technology companies such as Cannon and Vtech Holdings Ltd., and even low-tech companies such as the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. and Continental AG. The authors, borrowing a phrase from the *Communist Manifesto*, noted the "specter haunting the Mexican economy: Soaring costs are eroding Mexico's position as a low-cost manufacturing site."

The report goes on to discuss the political travails besetting President Vicente Fox's aspirations to turn Mexico into a big manufacturing competitor in the world market, something of little interest to workers but of great concern to former Coca-Cola executive turned politician Vicente Fox. Of much greater interest is the shift of one manufacturer from Mexico to the United States.

It seems that the Monterrey, Mexico-based Grupo IMSA discovered that it costs less to produce its insulated metal building panels in Lewisville, Tex., than it did in Mexico. Hence, Lewisville wage

slaves get to be exploited by Grupo IMSA rather than Mexican wage slaves. Cheery news indeed!

IMSA's CEO, Eugenio Clariond, confessed, "We had a better cost structure in Texas than in Mexico. Raw materials cost less, and electricity costs less. The only thing that's cheaper in Mexico is the cost of labor."

The key words of Mr. Clariond's observations are in the phrase "cost structure," not "cost of labor." Every capitalist worthy of his or her exploiting "salt" understands that competitive virility lies in overall costs or cost structure. Behind overall costs, however, looms the productivity of labor.

The production of insulated metal panels and the profits derived from the exploitation of labor depends not only the productivity of the production line worker, but on the productivity of *all* workers engaged in the making of that commodity. This includes the mining of the metal that forms the panels, the processing of the ore from extraction to the mills where it is fashioned into coils of sheet steel, the transportation of materials, the manufacturing, forming and cutting machinery used to shape the product, the chemical substances used to form the insulating materials, and production of energy required in the processes of manufacture.

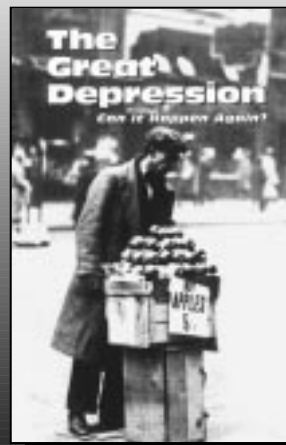
The shift to Texas should come as no surprise since the American working

class is the most productive in the world. The 2002 World Competitive Yearbook confirms this, compiled by the Swiss business school IMD International that lists the United States as *numero uno* among the nations of the world.

Of the 49 countries listed, Mexico is 41st, between India and the Philippines; China is 31st; whereas Malaysia, Korea and Thailand exceed Mexico.

This is doleful news for the American working class. They have the dubious privilege of being the most intensely exploited working class in the world! What an honor! What an accomplishment! For it is the rate of exploitation of wage labor that impels the heartbeat of every capitalist.

This bit of news should steel the resolve of every member of the American working class to end the system of human exploitation, the competitive madness, the environmental degradation, the destruction, poverty and war that are its inevitable accompaniment.



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...FBI's New Powers

(Continued from page 1)

Accordingly, in times of social turmoil and potential challenges to its rule, or to its most vital interests, it will not hesitate to trample upon democratic rights or even jettison democracy altogether in favor of autocracy, if the prevailing factions of that class find that necessary. History has demonstrated that time and again.

The only permanent solution to

the threat of totalitarianism is to get rid of its cause. Workers can secure their rights and liberties once and for all only by organizing politically and industrially to abolish capitalism and replace it with a social system in which they will exercise *democratic* control over the entire economy—the industrial democracy of socialism.

Educating our class to the need for this transformation of society,

organizing politically and industrially to build our strength and force as peaceful a change as possible, and disciplining our ranks to tirelessly work toward these ends—these are the primary activities to which we of the working class should dedicate ourselves at this late date in the beginning of the new millennium.

—K.B.

...Supporters of the SLP

(Continued from page 1)

as you or I would like to see listed there, of course, but enough to show that you and I are not alone in this fight.

Another reason for asking you to look at the "Funds" columns of the last few months is that the SLP has a very important decision to make—a decision that cannot be postponed for more than a few weeks, and that you and the others listed are, collectively, the central and decisive consideration in that decision.

That decision is whether we can continue to do what we have been doing until now, or not.

Actually it is less of a decision to be made than it is a decision

that may be forced upon us. The alternatives open to us are limited, and there is talk that circumstances have already forced that decision on us.

You and those whose names have appeared in the "Funds" column of this and other issues of *The People* since last October have made your wishes clear. If you had it within your power to decide you would decide that the SLP and *The People* should push ahead without losing a step. However, that may not be possible—and because it may not be possible a new question has forced itself to the front. That question is this:

If it becomes necessary for the

SLP to retrench, to reduce the frequency or possibly suspend publication of *The People* for a time while we reassess the situation and overhaul the SLP's national headquarters operation, will you stay in the fight?

The way to say yes, that you are in the fight for the long haul, is to send your contributions to the SLP Emergency Fund, to ask for an SLP Sustainer card and to pledge a regular monthly contribution.

Please, use the coupon printed in this issue to send your contribution to the fund and to sign up as a regular SLP Sustainer.

Sincerely yours,
ROBERT BILLS
National Secretary

...Socialist Labor Party

(Continued from page 4)

started originally with the idea that the capture of political power would accomplish the revolution, has been compelled by the exigencies of the navigation of the socio-political waters of the land to so remodel its course as to aim simultaneously at the conquest of political power and at the promotion of that economic organization of the working class, without which, as the manifesto of the New Jersey Unity Conference well puts it, political victory would be but a "flash in the pan" if not an invitation to "national disaster."

The contrast-parallel between the SLP and the German Social Democracy is of keen interest to comprehend the track of the SLP—the backward political and social condition of Germany compelled the German socialist ship to be steered several points further away from its goal than when it started; the advanced political and social condition of the United States, on the contrary, compelled the SLP ship to be steered several points closer to its goal than when first launched.

Five Tenets of Organization

The history of the SLP from its incipency up to date has been the struggle, triumphantly carried on, to establish the following five tenets, without which, jointly, the socialist movement of the land can only become a turbid pool for "intellectual" and other schemers to fish in after political preferment, and fake the movement into rotteness. These five tenets are:

First—The economic organization is essential to the emancipation of the working class.

Second—The political movement of labor is indispensable in the struggle for emancipation.

Third—The available political movement of socialism must be the direct off-shoot from the classconsciously economically organized working class.

Fourth—The political movement, that is available in the struggle for labor's emancipation, is in

duty bound to recognize its parent and source. "Neutrality" cannot be found in its vocabulary: where the word is found, it is evidence of the spuriousness of the alleged political movement.

Fifth—There is an obvious connection between the political and the economic movement of labor—no less and no stronger a connection than there is between the scouts of an army and the army itself. Indispensable as its scouts are to an army, so indispensable is its political movement to the integrally, industrially organized working class. As unessential as its scouts are for the army's final act of battle, so unessential is the political movement for that final act of emancipation, which consists in the "taking and holding" of the productive powers of the land. It is "without affiliation" with its scouts that an army delivers battle. "Without affiliation" with its political arm, the working class, embattled in its industrially constructed economic organization, moves into possession and ousts the capitalist class.

SLP vs. Social Democracy

As I said above, the establishment of these tenets, now no longer left in doubt, has been accompanied with a continuous struggle. Beautiful are the struggles of the movement in their various manifestations in the several countries of modern civilization. In none, however, does the special struggle, carried on in America by the SLP, present so inspiring a sight. Due to the backwardness of capitalist development, together with the therefrom flowing political backwardness in most of the other countries, the socialist movements in them are more closely alike than they are to the socialist movement that American conditions demand. As a consequence, the fact was seen, sad to record although natural enough, that the SLP was and is unsympathetic to the socialist movements of the rest of the world.

Under the Banner of the SLP

Added to this unavoidable cir-

cumstance came another, to a certain degree the reflex of the first: the vaguely socialistic revolutionary proletarian elements of the land that were groping their way toward solid ground were, in a measure, captured by "intellectual" immigrants who took their bearings from Europe, set up an opposition party to the SLP, and rolled up at the last presidential election 400,000 votes for their ticket, while the SLP barely held its own with 34,000 votes.

No more magnificent sight does the movement anywhere present than the sight which followed. The party which had just polled 400,000 votes but was reared on untenable ground, immediately grew top-heavy and began to crumble. The SLP, with its smaller but well-planted organization, immediately began to enlarge. The militant element in the opposition party throughout the land began to draw near the SLP element, and are now in full train of coalescing. Its vote, the only thing that opposition party could boast of, has been melting away like snow before the sun, with New York, Chicago and even Milwaukee leading in the melting away process. It is an inspiring evidence of the strength inherent in soundness, and of the honesty and intelligence that animates the masses in substance. Reliant upon these facts, the SLP fought out this battle single-handed against the world.

There is where the party stands today. The spontaneous rising of the Industrial Workers of the World is an earnest that whatever struggles still are ahead—and no doubt there are many and fierce ones to come—the movement in America will no longer have to wade knee-deep in the bogs of inexperience. The militant element, gathering in the camp of the IWW, is drilling the "army of occupation" that is to "take and hold" the productive powers of the land, and set up the administrative government of the Socialist Republic—with the battle-rent and battle-ried banner of the SLP blazoning on the march.

activities

Activities notices must be received by the Friday preceding the third Wednesday of the month.

CALIFORNIA

Oakland
Discussion Meeting—Section San Francisco Bay Area will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, July 20, beginning at 4 p.m., at the Rockridge Branch Library, Community Room 1, 5366 College Ave. (corner of College & Manila streets), Oakland. Moderator: Frank Prince. Topic: "Capitalism Breeds War."

San Jose

Discussion Meeting—Section San Francisco Bay Area will hold a discussion meeting on Saturday, July 27, 1–4 p.m., at the Joyce Ellington Library (formerly Empire Branch Library), 491 E. Empire St. (between 10th and 11th sts.), San Jose. Moderator: Bruce Cozzini.

OHIO

North Royalton

Discussion & Social—Section Cleveland will hold a discussion and social on Sunday, July 28, at

9626 York Rd., North Royalton. Begins at 1:30 p.m. Refreshments served. For more information please call 440-237-7933.

OREGON

Portland
Discussion Meetings—Section Portland holds discussion meetings every second Saturday of the month. Meetings are usually held at the Central Library, but the exact time varies. For more information please call Sid at 503-226-2881 or visit our Web site at <http://slp.pdx.home.mindspring.com>. The general public is invited.

TEXAS

Houston

Discussion Meetings—Section Houston holds discussion meetings the last Saturday of the month at the Houston Public Library, Franklin Branch, 6440 W. Belfort, southwest Houston. The time of the meetings varies. Those interested please call 713-721-9296, e-mail houstonslp@ev1.net or visit the section's Web site at <http://houstonslp.tripod.com>.

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Question Period

What Is a Sectarian Group?

A sectarian group is one that sets up a program that it seeks to force upon the workers by sheer force of argument, a program that, as Karl Marx described it, is based upon a "dogmatic recipe." "The sect," wrote Marx, "views its *raison d'être* [reason for existence] and its *point d'honneur* [point of honor], not in what it has in common with the class movement, but in a special shibboleth [criterion or test] that distinguishes it from this movement."

It is a mistake to assume that a sect is necessarily small. Two organizations that Marx opposed—Pierre Proudhon's in France and Ferdinand Lassalle's General Association of German Workers in Germany—were both numerically strong, yet they were sects.

A distinguishing feature of a sect is that it disregards historic forces. It does not rely on historic forces to set the masses into motion but rather on its own, usually very superficial, argument.

Are You Aware That the SLP Is Frequently Charged With Being Sectarian?

We are, and we know the sources of the slander. They were the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. We also know why they circulated this slander. They could not answer the Marxist logic of the SLP, and rarely tried. To spare themselves the mortification

and ignominy of exposure as charlatans and the epitome of anti-Marxism, they brazenly "disposed" of the SLP with the malicious charge of "sectarian."

Another reason for this studied detraction, and perhaps the primary one, is that it subtly suggests that their policies of collaborating with the enemies of labor and exploiting fallacies set afoot among the workers are antisectarian, therefore correct. If an SLP member says they are betraying the workers by exploiting some fallacious notion—as, for example, that reforms can prevent the plight of the workers from worsening—they take refuge in the detraction that the SLP is "sectarian," that it "keeps aloof from the masses," and is "doctrinaire" or "dogmatic." Few of these anti-Marxists know how Marx and Engels used the term "sectarian." They only know that, like "dogmatic" and "doctrinaire," it is a convenient device for ducking the logic of the SLP.

How Does the SLP Answer the Charge That It Is "Sectarian"?

Because the SLP will not exploit popular fallacies, because it remains aloof from movements that must ultimately end in disaster and the further befuddlement of the workers, it is called "sectarian" by those who would traduce it.

The SLP, however, is not and never was a sect. It is not and never was doctrinaire or dogmatic. It has

work 10- to 12-hour days, six days a week, for as little as \$20 a day. Armed guards stood watch in the fields and work camps where pickers lived.

In 1997, that employer was sentenced to 15 years in federal prison. Another labor contractor is currently serving three years for holding 30 workers in two trailers in a swamp near Immokalee. The CIW's anti-slavery program is currently investigating a third case.

The American South is a region of few unions and low wages, but grassroots organizing projects are spreading rapidly. In the eyes of many traditional unions, the new Southern workers—immigrant agricultural labors, who often don't speak English—are difficult or impossible to organize. But for Benitez and the CIW, the immigrant status of the Immokalee workforce is an advantage to organizers, who use popular education techniques that have become part of the culture of social justice movements in Central America and the Caribbean. Many workers can't read, but movies, popular theater, cartoons and drawings help them recognize their situation and participate in changing it.

This spring the CIW took two busloads of its members on a "Taco Bell Truth Tour," which culminated in a demonstration of 2,000 workers and supporters outside the company's blue, glass office tower in Irvine, in California's Orange County. Taco Bell maintains it is not responsible for the work conditions of tomato pickers since it doesn't employ them directly. Nevertheless, company representatives met with Benitez and other CIW activists.

In a statement after the meeting, Laurie Gannon, Taco Bell spokesperson, said that "we allowed them to share their views and they allowed us to clarify some of their statements. It's still too early to tell what will happen because we're still talking about this."

always accepted new views when it has been shown that these were true views. Its program is the result of the application of Marxism to American conditions, and none of those who call the SLP "sectarian" has ever successfully refuted the logic and Marxist integrity of its program. Many of them have not even attempted to understand it, and all they know about it is hearsay, much of which is of malicious origin. What they really mean when they call the SLP "sectarian" is that the SLP is always there to deflate their specious reform schemes and to expose them as anti-Marxist in principle.

The SLP is uncompromising. It sticks to its Marxist principles and will not compromise them to "get ahead." It will not exploit a popular fallacy for the sake of transient advantage. That path could only lead to disaster, because when conditions do shake the workers out of their torpor, they will rightly hold suspect any organization that exploited their errors. Moreover, the purpose, or *raison d'être*, as Marx would say, of a socialist organization is to educate the workers, explain to them their class aims and the meaning of the recurring crises of capitalism, and organize them for the conquest of socialism.

Funds

(May 18–June 14)

SLP Emergency Fund

Joan Davis \$1,200; Mary Buha \$500; Section New York City \$250; \$200 each Chris Dobreff, Joseph L. Bregni; Anonymous \$105; Henry Coretz \$115; \$100 each Marty Radov, Michael A. Ogletree; Phillip Colligan \$75; Rudy and Aune Gustafson \$56; \$50 each Daniel Macintosh, Robert Ormsby, William E. Tucker.

\$25 each Gilbert Dewart, John Hagerty, Rafael Falcón, Rosemary & John Gale, S. Yates; \$20 each Edmund J. Light, Gregory Fuchs, Matthew Rinaldi, Daniel Brian Lazarus; J. Michael Jacobs \$15; Marshall G. Soura \$12; \$10 each Frank Rudolph, Joseph J. Frank, Richard F. Mack, Sid Rasmussen; David Mohle \$9; \$5 each Marotte, Robert Gray; Michael A. Wenskunas \$3; George Peter Jr. \$2.

Total: \$3,347.00

SLP Sustainer Fund

Robert P. Burns \$150; \$100 each Chris Dobreff, Bernard Bortnick, Karl H. Heck, Donald J. Donaker; Carl C. Miller Jr. \$70; Frank & Margaret Roemhild \$25; Section San Francisco Bay Area: William Kelley \$20; Chris Faatz \$10.

Total: \$675.00

Leaflet Fund

Michael A. Wenskunas \$4.00 (Total)

Socialist Labor Party

Financial Summary

(May 2002)

Expenses	\$ 9,971.60
Income	8,996.14
May Deficit	975.46
2002 Surplus	8,512.24

... Gauge

(Continued from page 1)

come with full compensation for the values they produce at their workplaces. It can only come with the end of the wage's system, the end of production for profit and the establishment of production for use as the basic principle behind the productive power of the country. In short, it can only mean the socialist reconstruction of society.

Florida Workers Take On Fast-Food Giant

By David Bacon
©Pacific News Service

IMMOKALEE, Fla.—Yo Quiero Taco Bell? If a small union of Florida farmworkers has its way, the nasal voice of the famous Chihuahua will be saying "No quiero Taco Bell" on college campuses nationwide.

For almost a decade, the campus anti-sweatshop movement has exposed the poor working conditions abroad that produce the big-label sportswear favored by American youth. Now tomato pickers in the Everglades are urging young people to look closer to home.

Students are "some of the largest consumers of fast-food tacos and chalupas," says Lucas Benitez, a leader of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). Conditions for some farmworkers here "are really no different from the conditions of Nike factory workers in Asia. The only difference is that we are here."

The offending taco ingredients are the tomatoes. Florida workers get 40–45 cents for filling a 32-pound bucket, working for a network of growers whose main customer is the fast-food giant. To make \$50 in one day, a worker must pick two tons of tomatoes—120 buckets, or one every four minutes.

Pickers would like to see Taco Bell pay growers an additional penny a pound. If that were passed on to workers, it would double their wages. Even if Taco Bell passes labor costs onto the finished product, at the cash register, consumers would see little difference.

Taco Bell, a subsidiary of Tricon Corp., has \$5.2 billion in sales annually, a quarter of its parent corporation's gross receipts. "Their tremendous revenues are based on

cheap ingredients, including cheap tomatoes picked at subpoverty wages," says Benitez. "We are tired of subsidizing Taco Bell's profits with our poverty."

Immokalee, in the middle of the Everglades, feels more like a labor reserve than a southwest Florida town. It's an unincorporated area where the farmworker population nearly doubles to 30,000 during the harvest season.

"Every day here, thousands of people wake up at 4 a.m. to beg for a day's work in the central parking lot in town," Benitez says. "And every Friday, they get checks from three or four different companies. No company has a fixed workforce. There are only the changing faces of Immokalee workers picking and planting every day."

Three decades ago, when Edward R. Murrow produced "Harvest of Shame," the celebrated exposé of semislave conditions among Florida farmworkers, the state's tomato pickers were African-Americans and black immigrants from the Caribbean. While Haitians still make up a significant percentage of that workforce, most Immokalee residents today are Mexican and Guatemalan.

But the plight of the nation's farmworkers has changed little since Murrow's television documentary. According to a U.S. Department of Labor report to Congress last year, farmworkers everywhere in the United States are at the bottom of the economic heap. And Florida pickers are among the poorest.

In the past five years the CIW has provided the Florida Department of Justice documentation of three slavery operations. One southwest Florida employer cited held over 400 people in bondage, forcing them to

THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY OF SOCIALISM

Revolutionary Program

The Socialist Labor Party has a twofold program for building a socialist society. What follows is a brief summary of its main points.

POLITICAL ACTION

To establish socialism, political unity under the banner of a mass political party of labor is needed. The role of the party is to educate workers to the need to abolish capitalism, to agitate for the formation of classconscious industrial unions, and to express the revolutionary mandate of the working class at the ballot box. The party must also aim to capture and dismantle the political state—the present territorial form of government—and thus pave the way for a new form of government, a participatory democracy based on *industry*.

ECONOMIC ACTION

To establish socialism, workers must unite *as a class*, by organizing new unions. These democratic, rank-and-file-controlled unions, built along the lines of industry, would not only fight day-to-day battles for better wages and conditions. Based on the principle that the working class is involved in a *class struggle* with the employing, capitalist class, a struggle that cannot be ended under the capitalist system, a Socialist Industrial Union movement would be motivated by a higher goal: replacing capitalist ownership of the industries and services with social ownership and democratic workers' control.

Thus, while fighting day-to-day battles, these unions would move toward that goal, mobilizing workers' real strength as the sole productive class in society by building the greatest possible unity and solidarity. When the majority of society is in favor of socialism, the Socialist Industrial Union would back up the decision made at the ballot box by taking, holding and operating the industries and services of the land in the social interest.

Socialist Industrial Unions would then become the governing bodies of socialist society. We would have a truly democratic government in which society's useful producers would be in control of their own economic security and well-being.

NOT A BLUEPRINT

The chart below is not a blueprint. Rather, it is intended to illustrate graphically the principle upon which Socialist Industrial Unionism and the future socialist industrial democracy rest, using the auto industry as an example. A similar chart could be used for any socially necessary industry or service. A chart at the upper right depicts the flow of representation in socialist society.

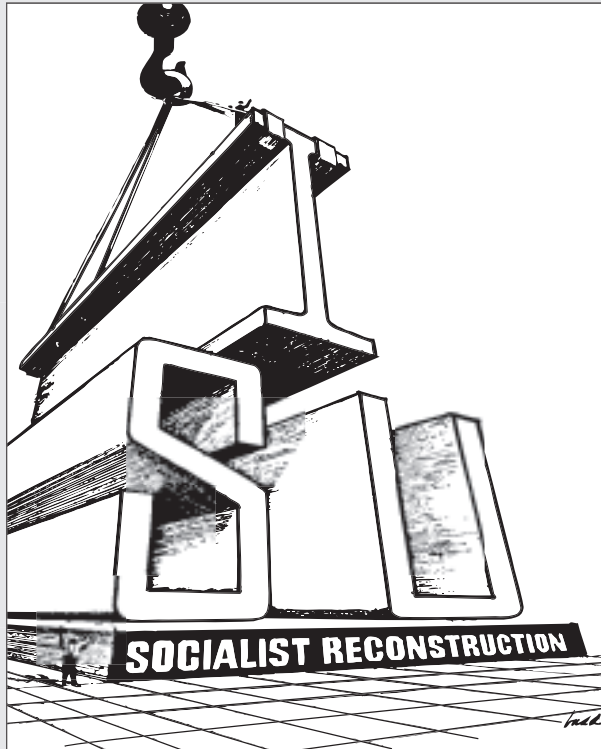
The Socialist Industrial Union unites workers for the establishment of socialism. And it provides the governmental framework through which to organize and administer social production for the benefit of all the people. Council members at every level of government will be elected from industrial constituencies which coincide with the subdivisions of the integral industrial union of all the useful producers. This industrial self-government of the producers provides a viable means for society to operate the economy collectively and democratically, without social classes or any form of state oppression.

Revolutionary Act

The revolutionary ballot will establish the *right of the people to establish socialist society.*

The Socialist Industrial Union will create the power to *back up* that right.

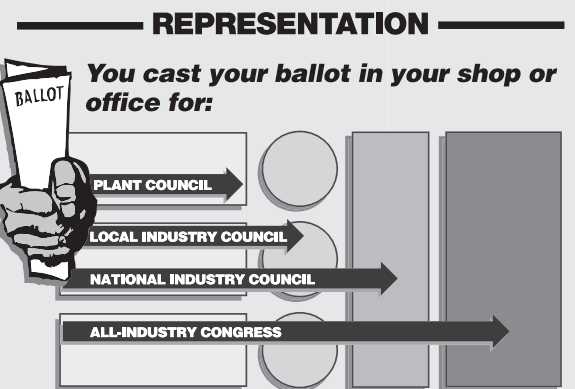
"Industrial unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and the goal once reached, the industrial union is the Socialist Republic in operation." — Daniel De Leon



New Society

After the revolution, the administration of all production and distribution will be the function of the democratically elected Socialist Industrial Union government.

As industry is organized for production, so will be the administration of the new socialist society:



Socialist Industrial Unionism is the only certain safeguard against bureaucratic usurpation. In socialist society final authority will rest with the rank and file of useful producers.

The useful producers will elect administrators and representatives to all levels of government, and they will have the easily and immediately exercisable power to recall and remove any administrator or representative who, in their judgment, fails to serve their interests in office.

The Socialist Industrial Union, in firm possession of the industries and services of the land, will insure that all power remains in the only safe place for power to be—with the rank and file of society's useful producers.

Today, in the procapitalist unions, union bureaucrats are almighty, and union members are virtual subjects. But in the Socialist Industrial Union each individual worker will have an effective voice as well as a vote in everything from the operation of the workplace to the administration of society.

This will be a social organization in which the people who do the work will have complete democratic control of their tools and products—thus production will at long last be for use and the benefit of all.

THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

